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RUEHAK/USDAO ANKARA TU PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 000926

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/12/2028

TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [PTER](#) [IZ](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: TURKEY-IRAQ: TURKEY RETALIATES AGAINST PKK ATTACK
ON TURKISH MILITARY FACILITY

Classified By: Acting DCM Kimberly Deblauw, for Reasons 1.4 (B,D).

Turkish Air and Artillery Strikes

1. (S) Following a May 9 PKK attack against a Turkish jandarma border post in Hakkari province that killed several Turkish soldiers, Turkish artillery and warplanes launched strikes on May 10 targeting PKK elements fleeing into northern Iraq following the attack and other suspected PKK facilities. Turkish operations began with artillery strikes from 1100 to 1200 local time and 1900 to 2000 on May 10, followed by air strikes from 2030 to 2330 hours local time. Turkish General Staff (TGS) officials provided approximately one hour advance notice for each of the strikes to U.S. personnel via the Ankara Coordination Directorate (in the Office of Defense Cooperation (ODC) in Ankara) allowing battlespace to be deconflicted.

2. (S) The Turkish air operations were carried out against a variety of targets near the Turkey-Iraq border extending from south of Haftanin to Avi Shin. The air strikes targeting south of the Haftanin region were carried out by two F-16s, while the broader air strikes targeting an array of suspected PKK positions in Avi Shin were carried out by seven F-16s and six F-4 fighters.

Turkish General Staff Announcements

3. (U) The TGS published three notices related to the May 1-2 air strikes targeting the Qandil mountains and the May 10 artillery and air strikes on its website. The first, a press statement on May 10, reported on the results of the May 1-2 strikes against PKK targets in the Qandil mountains. It stated that intelligence sources have confirmed that the May 1 and 2 air operations in the Qandil region dealt "a serious blow to the PKK." According to this notice, approximately 200 terrorists abandoned their weapons and fled from Qandil to other areas following the May 1-2 strikes. The notice highlighted attempts by several senior PKK members to flee, including Cemil Bayik and another codenamed "Bahoz." It further stated that Bayik had fled to a neighboring country (Note: presumably Iran. End Note) together with a "large group of terrorists," and that a majority of his bodyguards were killed during a fire fight with that country's security forces. The notice interpreted the PKK attack against a military outpost in Hakkari on May 9 as an act of desperation, and said the Turkish military responded immediately to the attack. According to the notice, two

members of Turkey's security forces were killed in the May 9 PKK attack (a subsequent May 10 TGS statement indicated that four additional members of the Turkish security forces were killed in the attack, for a total of six personnel killed).

¶4. (U) A second notice, posted on the TGS website early May 11, provided a brief account of the May 10 strikes, stating that the Turkish military conducted successful air and artillery strikes against PKK/Kongra-Gel targets in the Avashin-Basyan regions of northern Iraq on May 10 in response to the PKK attack against a Turkish military outpost in Hakkari noted above. The statement emphasized that operations were targeted solely against the PKK/Kongra-Gel terror organization and not against civilians in northern Iraq or local groups which have not committed any hostile acts. A third notice on May 11 noted that the May 10 air strikes also destroyed a PKK/Kongra-Gel press and propaganda center.

Media Reaction to Strikes

¶5. (U) Extensive Turkish media reaction following the strikes focused on TGS statements asserting that the PKK is on the run, and the funerals of the six soldiers killed during the PKK attack, which were held on Mother's Day.

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